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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7548
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 7986
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 5318
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 9255
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 6481
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3614
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN 0728
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3874
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 4053
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 5493
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO 0409
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 6238
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0935
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 2254
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 1149
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LA PAZ 001175

SIPDIS

EEB/TPP/MTA, CHEVER VOLTMER; EEB/TPP/ABT, GARY CLEMENTS;
AND EEB/TPP, MIKAEL LURIE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/20/2018

TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [AGR](#) [FAO](#) [FAS](#) [IFAD](#) [IICA](#) [BL](#)

SUBJECT: AGRICULTURAL DEMARCHES DELIVERED, BOLIVIAN FOOD
SAFETY PRECARIOUS

REF: A. SECSTATE 50336

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 52628

[1](#)C. LA PAZ 1053

Classified By: ADCM Chief Mike Hammer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 5.

[1](#)2. (SBU) EconOff delivered demarche regarding the U.S. candidate for Chairperson FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission (Ref. A) to Carmen Timeo, the new head of the Bolivian Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (SENASAG). The demarche on the President's global food security initiative (Ref. B) was delivered to the Director General of the PL-480 Secretariat, Dr. Cesar Ayala. The PL-480 directorate is functioning as the Bolivian government's lead organization for food imports, in particular wheat.

[1](#)3. (C) May 19 was Timeo's first day as head of Senasag. Her predecessor, Rolando Cazol, resigned the position on May 16. In Cazol, Post had a consistent interlocutor within the Ministry of Agriculture, the most hostile of Bolivian ministries toward US cooperation. We had been able to meet with him on several occasions and he had been willing to try to work with us to revamp how remaining Title I funding could be used to support technical programs at Senasag. Additionally, he had expressed interest in using the Title I monies to send Senasag personnel to training programs as recommended by the USDA regional counselor in Lima, Eugene Philhower. While a small gesture, it was one of the first acts of possible cooperation regarding the Title I monies over the past year. In a conversation with Timeo, EconOff offered to use USDA funding to send a member of Senasag to the three day outreach event in Antigua, Guatemala on June 11-13 for members of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC). Timeo was noncommittal.

[1](#)4. (C) In a conversation with Cazol following his

resignation, he was very pessimistic as to the direction that Senasag was headed. He reported that reorganization plans were not advancing and that there was no sincere interest in advancing a technical agenda for the agency; political considerations were always at the forefront. Moreover, he said that his efforts to make Senasag an autonomous part of the Ministry of Agriculture, independent from foreign aid and funded by the government of Bolivia were not heeded. When asked if his openness to at least try to work with the U.S. Embassy to help maintain Senasag technical programs was a part of why he left the agency, he said that Minister of Agriculture Rivero did not agree with his approach. In a private meeting on May 16, Rivero was adamant that no "conditions" should be placed on American aid. This disagreement, as well as his frustration in trying to push a technical agenda at Senasag, led to his resignation. He said that the Timeo is a very good "foot soldier for Minister Rivero". Post expects difficulties in establishing effective cooperation with the Timeo, and does not anticipate Bolivian support for the US candidate for the Codex chairmanship.

15. (C) Regarding the President's global food security initiative, Ayala listened politely. He was grateful to hear that a request for a wheat donation to Bolivia had been made by the Embassy. Ayala explained that in agriculture policy wheat production and importation is the priority of the Morales administration. They have launched several programs to expand domestic production and are working to import both raw wheat and flour from Argentina. Ayala hoped to avoid restrictions on raw wheat exports from Argentina and said

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that the two governments were currently negotiating an exception for Bolivia. Ayala noted that Argentina already had granted an export exemption for raw wheat to Brazil. He also expressed interest in resuming imports of U.S. wheat and Post provided the contact information for the U.S. Wheat Association Regional Representative in Chile. Action Request: Post requests an update on request for wheat (Ref. C).
URS